

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10
OIC-02 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 SAA-01 SES-02 SSM-03 /117 W
-----059828 191615Z /50

O 191548Z AUG 78
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3341
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
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FOR DALLEY FROM SORENSON

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM EG PEPR
SUBJECT: WORLD CONFERENCE ON RACISM: TACTICAL
ASSESSMENT

REF: (A) STATE 209399; (B) GENEVA 12635; (C) GENEVA 12637
(D) GENEVA 12618

1. WITH THE FLOATING BY THE ARABS OF LANGUAGE WHICH OMITTS SPECIFIC LINKAGE BETWEEN ZIONISM AND RACISM, IT SEEMS TO US THAT THE STRATEGY SUGGESTED IN STATE 209399 HAS BEEN OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS. THE TACTICAL SITUATION WE NOW FACE IS THAT LANGUAGE HAS BEEN DEVELOPED WHICH, WHILE AVOIDING THIS SPECIFIC LINKAGE, NEVERTHELESS DRIFTS PERILOUSLY CLOSE TO THE LINE. EVEN SO, WE THINK IT REFLECTS THE EFFORTS OF EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR EL SHAFEI AND OTHER ARAB MODERATES TO TONE DOWN WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN A SUBSTANTIALLY WORSE DOCUMENT. OUR EFFORTS NOW MUST FOCUS ON WORKING THROUGH OUR FRIENDS TO KEEP AS MUCH OF THIS LANGUAGE AS POSSIBLE OUT OF THE FINAL DOCUMENTS OF THE CONFERENCE.

2. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE HAVE IT FROM A NUMBER OF SOURCES THAT IT IS THE AFRICANS THEMSELVES WHO WILL LIKELY TRY HARDEST -- AND WITH THE GREATEST CHANCE FOR SUCCESS -- TO TEMPER THE ZIONISM-RACISM ISSUE. AFTER ALL, THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON RACISM IS VERY MUCH THE AFRICANS' CONFERENCE, AND PLENARY STATEMENTS UP TO THIS WEEKEND HAVE RESPECTED THIS BY MAKING CLEAR THAT THE PARTICIPANTS REGARD IT NOT SO MUCH AS A CONFERENCE ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RACISM AS A CONFERENCE ON SOUTH AFRICA. THUS, WHEN THE USSR AND EASTERN EUROPEANS ATTEMPTED TO WIDEN THIS FOCUS BY CIRCULATING A TEXT WHICH TOOK SOME CHEAP SHOTS AT THE U.S. (GENEVA 12637), WE ARE TOLD THAT THIS WAS RESENTED, NOT ONLY BY THE AFRICANS, BUT BY THIRD WORLD DELEGATIONS GENERALLY.

3. THIS CONSTRAINT IS OPERATING ON THE ARABS ALSO. IN EFFECT, THE ARAB CAUCUS TRIED ITS HAND AT LANGUAGE WHICH MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE FOR INCLUSION IN THE FINAL PRODUCT OF THE CONFERENCE (GENEVA 12618) BUT DECIDED IT WOULD BE BETTER TO SHIFT GEARS FROM THE PROBLEMATICAL ZIONISM-RACISM EQUATION TO A MORE PERTINENT APPROACH WHICH WOULD ATTEMPT AN ISRAEL-SOUTH AFRICAN LINKAGE. WE THINK THAT IT WILL BE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO ELIMINATE THIS LATTER KIND OF REFERENCE FROM THE FINAL CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND THAT OUR EFFORTS WOULD BE MORE FRUITFULLY DIRECTED TOWARD AVOIDING REFERENCES TO THE TREATMENT OF PALESTINIANS BY THE ISRAELIS ON THE BASIS OF RACISM.

4. THE TEXTS WHICH HAVE APPEARED THUS FAR ALL LACK FORMAL STANDING, AND IT APPEARS TO BE AGREEABLE TO ALL

TO KEEP THINGS THAT WAY, AT LEAST THROUGH THE WEEKEND.
THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION IS THE SECRETARIAT'S DRAFT
SUGGESTION FOR A PROGRAM OF ACTION. AT THE PROMPTING

OF AN ENERGETIC MALTESE CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE II IS
SCHEDULED TO MEET TODAY (SATURDAY) TO TRY TO WORK ON
THE BASIS OF THIS TEXT. ON THE OTHER HAND, MEETINGS
OF COMMITTEE I, WHICH IS CHARGED WITH PREPARING THE
DECLARATION FROM THE CONFERENCE, HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED
WHILE AFRICAN DELEGATIONS CONCENTRATE ON THIS. PRESENT PLANS
CALL FOR PLENARY STATEMENTS TO BE CONCLUDED BY TUESDAY,
AUGUST 22, AT WHICH POINT COMMITTEES I AND II ARE
EXPECTED TO BE HEAVILY ENGAGED IN DRAFTING THEIR

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3344
INFO AMEMBASF ABU DHABI
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RESPECTIVE DOCUMENTS, MOST LIKELY IN SUBORDINATE (AND, THEREFORE, CLOSED) WORKING GROUPS. PLENARY ADOPTION OF THE FINAL DOCUMENTS IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN FRIDAY, AUGUST 25, AND TO CONCLUDE THE SAME DAY. AS ALREADY REPORTED, IN THE COURSE OF THIS FINAL EVENT, NAMIBIA DAY IS TO BE OBSERVED BRIEFLY WITH APPROPRIATE STATEMENTS BY DELEGATIONS.

5. THE MISSION HAS LINES OUT THROUGH A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS AND MEMBERS OF THE SECRETARIAT THROUGH WHOM WE ARE WORKING. WE ARE ESPECIALLY IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE CANADIAN DELEGATION, WHICH HAS ASSUMED LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE WESTERN GROUP. (THE NETHERLANDS, SO FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, IS NOT PLAYING A PROMINENT ROLE, AND THEIR POSITION WOULD IN ANY EVENT BE SUBSUMED IN THE GENERAL POSITION WHICH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IS TAKING). INTERESTINGLY, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE FRENCH HAVE BEEN THE MOST ADAMANT IN EC-9 INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS IN INSISTING THAT THE COMMUNITY SPEAK OUT QUICKLY, FORCEFULLY AND UNANIMOUSLY AGAINST A DIRECT ZIONISM-RACISM LINK.

6. WE ARE TOLD BY CANADIAN AMBASSADOR JAY THAT A WESTERN GROUP MEETING AUGUST 18 WHICH SAW THE USUAL BALANCING OFF BETWEEN HARD-LINERS AND SOFT-LINERS, RESULTED IN AGREEMENT THAT THE BEST TACTIC TO TAKE WAS TO PLAY ON AND ENCOURAGE ANXIETY AMONG SOME OF THE AFRICANS THAT THE ARABS MIGHT RUIN THEIR SHOW. THIS TACTIC INVOLVES DEFERING FOR A PRUDENT PERIOD TO THE AFRICANS TO FASHION DRAFT PRODUCTS WHICH OTHERS COULD THEN WORK ON. THE KEY CONCLUSION REACHED BY THE WESTERN GROUP -- AND ONE WHICH THIS MISSION SHARES --

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IS THAT THE OUTCOME OF THIS CONFERENCE TURNS NOW ON DECISIONS BY THE AFRICANS, NOT THE ARABS.

7. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE AFRICANS ARE ACUTELY CONSCIOUS OF THE FACT THAT THE US IS NOT PRESENT BECAUSE OF PREVIOUS MISCARRIAGES, AND THE WESTERN MEMBERS WHO ARE PRESENT HAVE BEEN EMPHASIZING HOW LOW IS THE THRESHHOLD OF TOLERANCE IF THERE IS TO BE ANY REPETITION OF THE ZIONISM-RACISM GAMBIT. THIS SORT OF APPROACH TO THE CONFERENCE IS NOT CONGENIAL TO ARAB CONCERNS, OF COURSE, AND THE JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR REMARKED THE OTHER DAY THAT "THE ARABS MUST HAVE SOMETHING, OR WHERE ARE WE?" FOR THE MOMENT, THE ARABS ARE WORKING ON THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION.

8. THE SOVIET AND EASTERN EUROPEAN TEXT WHICH HAS BEEN FLOATED (GENEVA 12637) HAS ARRESTED THE ATTENTION OF WESTERN PARTICIPANTS. IT IS AN OBVIOUS AND RATHER CLUMSY ATTEMPT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF US NON-PARTICIPATION. IT IS SEEN WITHIN THE WESTERN GROUP AS (A) AN EFFORT TO EXTRACT AS MUCH ANTI-US MILEAGE OUT OF THE CONFERENCE AS POSSIBLE, (B) A FIRM CLAIM ON A SEAT AT ANY FINAL DRAFTING SESSIONS AT THE CONFERENCE, AND (C) A DOCUMENT WHICH, ACCEPTED OR NOT, THE USSR COULD ARGUE TO HAVE ANNEXED TO SOME OTHER CONFERENCE DOCUMENT AS THE EXPRESSION OF A GROUP OF PARTICIPATING STATES. OVERALL, IT IS THE CONCLUSION OF WESTERN PARTICIPANTS THAT THE USSR IS PLAYING A HIGHLY MISCHIEVOUS ROLE AT THIS CONFERENCE. WHILE A CHALLENGE TO WESTERN INTERESTS, THE POTENCY OF THE EASTERN TEXT SEEMS TO BE DILUTED BY THE FACT THAT OTHERS ARE ON TO THE GAME AND ANNOYED BY IT, ESPECIALLY THE AFRICANS AND THE NON-ALIGNED.

9. IN OUR VIEW, THE U.S. (A) HAS PROJECTED ITS INFLUENCE

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FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3343
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

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INTO THIS CONFERENCE TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT IT WOULD BE
PROFITABLE TO DO; (B) IS WITNESSING DESIRED RESULTS UP
TO THIS POINT; AND (C) SHOULD NOT MAKE THE MISTAKE OF
MOVING FURTHER INTO THE MIDST OF A MEETING IN WHICH WE
ARE FORMALLY NOT PRESENT. INDEED, OUR MANIFEST ABSENCE
IS PRESENTLY OUR GREATEST STRENGTH IN INFLUENCING THE
COURSE AND OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE. WHAT THE AFRICANS
WOULD LIKE BEST WOULD BE AN OUTCOME WITH WHICH THE USG
COULD ASSOCIATE ITSELF IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, AFTER
THE FACT, EVEN THOUGH WE WERE NOT PRESENT AT THE
CONFERENCE. OUR BEST TACTIC IS TO REINFORCE THIS WISH,
BUT TO THE EXTENT THAT WE MOVE IN TOO CONSPICUOUSLY,
WE FUSS THIS AND TEND TO RELIEVE OTHERS OF RESPONSIBILITIES
THAT MANY OF THEM WOULD BE HAPPY TO RELINQUISH.
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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 19 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1685026
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
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TAGS: SHUM, PEPR, EG, XX
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/88f05160-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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